किसान क्रेडिट कार्ड

2259. **श्री रमा शंकर कौशिक:** क्या वित्त मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार किसानों को पर्याप्त ऋण राशि प्रदान करने के उद्देश्य से 'किसान क्रेडिट कार्ड' जारी करने पर विचार कर रही है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है और ऋण की प्रस्तावित अधिकतम सीमा क्या है?

वित्त मंत्रालय (बैंकिंग, राजस्व तथा बीमा) में राज्य मंत्री (श्री कादम्बूर एम०आर० जनार्दनन): (क) और (ख) केन्द्रीय वित्त मंत्री द्वारा वर्ष 1998-99 के अपने बजट भाषण में की गई घोषणा के अनुसरण में, भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक ने सभी अनुसूचित वाणिज्यिक बैंकों से राष्ट्रीय कृषि और ग्रामीण विकास बैंक (नाबार्ड) द्वारा तैयार की गई माडल योजना के तर्ज पर उपयुक्त किसान क्रेडिट कार्ड योजना तैयार करने के लिए कहा है। इस योजना का उद्देश्य मुख्यतः किसानों की अल्पावधि ऋण अपेक्षाओं को पूरा करना है। इस योजना के अन्तर्गत बैंकों को उन किसानों को किसान क्रेडिट कार्ड उपलब्ध कराना है जो 5000 रुपए या उससे अधिक के उत्पादन ऋण की मंजूरी के पात्र हैं। इसकी कोई ऊपरी सीमा नहीं है। निरंतर आधार पर पहचान और लेनदेन की रिकार्डिंग को सुकर बनाने के लिए हिताधिकारी किसानों को क्रेडिट कार्ड और पास बुक या क्रेडिट कार्ड सह पास बुक जारी किया जाना है। इस योजना के अन्तर्गत दिया जाने वाला ऋण आवर्तनीय नकदी ऋण की प्रकृति का है और इसमें पूरे वर्ष के लिए किसानों की आवश्यकताओं को ध्यान में रखते हुए सीमा जो कि नियत है, के भीतर इच्छानुसार निकासी एवं वापसी अदायगी की व्यवस्था है। वार्षिक पुनरीक्षा के अध्यधीन इस क्रेडिट कार्ड की वैधता तीन वर्ष की अवधि के लिए होगी और फसल ऋणों पर लागू किए गए अनुसार ब्याज की दरें प्रभारित की जाएंगी। आज की तारीख तक, सरकारी क्षेत्र के सभी बैंकों ने किसान क्रेडिट कार्ड शुरू कर दिया है।

Zero Import Duty for IT Components

2260. SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item captioned "Gvoernment's dithering over zero import duty for parts to hit IT cos" which appeared in the Hindustan Times dated February 2, 1999; if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(b) whether the Information Technology Task force has submitted its report on Zero import duty for large number of IT components, if so, the salient features of the report; and

(c) what are the likely implications of bringing down the import duty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN): (a) Yes Sir. In this year's budget, the Government have reduced the import duty on a number of inputs for the IT sector. These include reduction in customs duty on—

(i) parts of computers and specified storage devices from 12% to 5%;

(ii) semiconductor devices, resistors, printed circuits and speficied electronic components from 25% to 15%;

(iii) specified integrated circuits and micro-assemblies from 12% to 5%;

(iv) specified raw materials for the electronics industry from 15% to 5%; and

(v) specified capital goods for manufacture or testing of semiconductor devices from 15% to 0%.

(b) Yes Sir. The salient features of the report of the Information Technology Task force include—

(i) duty free import of capital goods, raw materials, consumables, components and sub-assemblies by any IT product manufacturing unit called soft bonded IT unit on self-declaration basis;

(ii) exemption from all domestic taxes such as sales tax, entry tax, excise duty and octroi, on domestic purchases made by soft bonded IT units;

(iii) all domestic supplies made to soft bonded IT units to be treated as 'deemed exports';

(iv) all benefits available to Export Oriented Units to be extended to soft bonded IT units;

(v) all banking in soft bonded IT units to be allowed in hard currencies;

(vi) fiscal incentives for exports made by soft bonded IT units; and

(vii) duty free import of capital goods, raw materials and piece parts by any unit manufacturing IT products or electronic components.

(c) Bringing down the import duty is likely to increase the velocity of business. However, it is also likely to have substantial revenue implications and apprehension has also been expressed that reduction of import duty to zero level may also have an adverse impact on domestic industry manufacturing these goods.

Import of Coins

2261. SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Govt. have recently decided to import coins; if so, the details thereof, indicating the countries from where such import is being done and the extent of imports;

(b) what circumstances have forced Government to import coins; and

(c) whether it is a fact that even Indian rupees are printed outside India; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) The Government have decided to import 1000 million pieces of coins (Re. 1—300 MPCs, Rs. 2—300 MPCs and Rs. 5—400 MPCs) during 1999-2000. The coins will be imported on the basis of a global tender. The name's of the country/countries will be known only after the tender is finalised.

(b) The proposed import is to deal with shortage of coins in the country.

(c) Keeping in view the indigenous capacity of printing of currency notes and the requirement of Reserve Bank of India, the Government authorised import of 3600 million pieces of currency notes (Rs. 100—2000 MPCs and Rs. 500—1600 MPCs) as a one-time measure. The import was done by the Reserve Bank of India during 1997-98 and 1998-99 on the basis of a global tender.

Soiled notes in the North-Eastern Region

2262. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the Reserve Bank, Guwahati has allowed continuance of one, two and five rupee old soiled notes in a very unhygenic and uncivilized manner in the North-Eastern Region which are nowhere accepted in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons for still allowing continuance of such soiled notes knowing fully well about its health hazards;

(c) total quantity of coins that replaced old notes in the NER year-wise since introduction; and

(d) total number of such coins introduced in the country till date and State-wise percentage of distribution?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) and (b) As a long term policy, Government has coinised notes of Re. 1, Rs. 2 and Rs. 5 and hence printing of notes of these denominations was stopped from September' 94; January'95 and November'95, respectively. while the notes remain legal tender, the intention of Government is to remove these notes from circulation. Facilities are already available at all public sector banks for exchange of soiled notes for coins; the RBI has recently introduced a special drive for exchange of soiled notes of Re. 1, Rs. 2 and Rs. 5 at all its Issue Offices. This special drive has been given wide publicity by RBI in all